



POLICY BRIEF: UNCOVERING DISCIPLINE DISPARITIES FOR GIRLS & TGNC/NB YOUTH

Response to November 2019 Student Safety Data Release

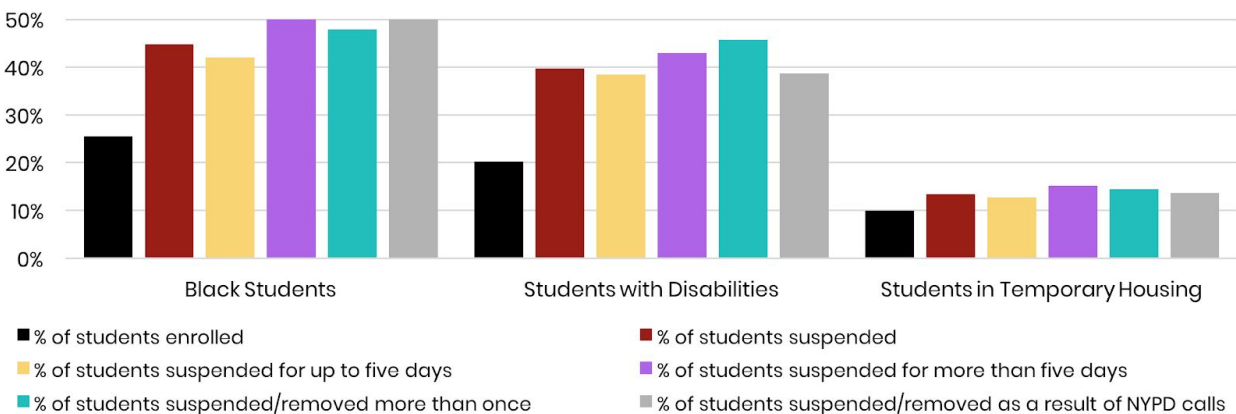
Every year, the New York City Department of Education is required to release data to the public on the use of suspensions and classroom removals in New York City public schools (LL 2015/093). The latest numbers, [posted on Friday, November 1, 2019](#), show a sharp decrease in exclusionary discipline, a promising step forward for our school climate reform work and GGE’s [School Girls Deserve Campaign](#).

School Exclusions	SY 2018–2019	SY 2017–2018	Change
Total Suspensions	32,801	36,668	-10.5%
Short-Term Suspensions	23,936	26,578	-9.9%
Long-Term Suspensions	8,865	10,090	-12.1%
Classroom Removals	12,415	12,625	-1.7%
All Exclusions	45,216	49,293	-8.3%

The November 2019 data release also follows [new revisions](#) made to the Student Code of Conduct which further limit the use of suspensions as a response to student behavior at school. Coupled together, these are significant strides toward education justice.

A Longstanding Need for Disaggregated Data

Unfortunately, the law mandating the release of discipline data (known as the Student Safety Act) currently does not require the disaggregation of data by race, gender, or two or more categories together. Thus, while it is alarmingly clear that Black students, students with disabilities, and students in temporary housing continue to be disproportionately suspended in New York City public schools, we cannot assess the impact on those students for which those identities intersect.



Further, while the data tells us that the most common discipline category is “Altercation” for students in grades 6 to 12, and “Minor Altercation” for elementary school students, we do not have access to the racial and gender disparities across all of these infraction categories. Our work, as supported by mounting research and evidence, tells us that **Black girls in particular are most often disciplined for defiance and subjective offenses rooted in racialized and gendered discrimination.** Disaggregating the data by multiple sets of intersecting identities would provide a more nuanced picture of the disciplinary experiences for students. Without that information, **we are not able to summarize the unique experiences of Black girls and girls of color.**

Supporting Transgender, Gender-Non-Conforming and Non-Binary Youth

GGE knows that Transgender, Gender-Non-Conforming and Non-Binary (TGNC/NB) students, and particularly TGNC/NB youth of color, face disproportionately high levels of school discipline and hostile school climates not captured in the Student Safety Act data. In fact, the [Mayor’s Leadership Team on School Climate & Discipline](#), formed in 2015, has acknowledged that disparities remain depending upon a student’s gender identity and expression.

The availability of school discipline data in New York City has brought to light serious and pervasive disparities and inspired reform efforts. **The absence of consistent sources of data that include gender identity and its intersections with discipline makes it difficult to understand the full scope of the problem or motivate deliberate remedies.** Including measures of gender identity could provide data critical to understanding the full scope of discipline disparities in New York City Public Schools and grow effective interventions.

Moving Forward

This year’s new Student Code of Conduct encourages schools more than ever to utilize guidance interventions and restorative practices to support students in school, and in turn, reduce the utilization of punitive, exclusionary discipline practices. We recognize the Department of Education’s stated commitment to [culturally responsive-sustaining education](#); we want to emphasize the importance of helping adult decision-makers examine biases, including anti-Blackness, which influence decisions to us exclusionary discipline and the [harshness](#) of the response.

Ultimately, young people with GGE’s *School Girls Deserve Campaign* call for the elimination of suspensions, as they do not address the roots of the problem at hand and create negative experiences. We look forward to a school system that achieves such a goal.